

## FIELD OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to collapsible dividers for cartons composed of corrugated or solid fibre or plastic and more particularly to a divider which resists separating into its component parts when it is being assembled in a carton or being turned upside down and which folds into a compact shape when being stored.

## BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Dividers are commonly used in conjunction with cartons for packing articles which are shipped in bulk. The dividers serve to separate the articles from one another and to increase the stacking strength of the carton. Drinking glasses and bottles containing alcoholic beverages and non-alcoholic beverages are commonly shipped in this way. Usually the dividers are composed of corrugated or solid fibre or plastic interconnected by means of tabs, slots and holes.

A shortcoming of many dividers is that they do not remain interconnected while they are being assembled in a carton or when they are being turned upside down. Assembly of the dividers in a carton is difficult if the dividers do not remain interconnected at this time. Removal of articles from a carton likewise is difficult if the dividers come apart. The reason is that articles are frequently removed by turning the carton upside down. If the dividers come apart at this time, the articles may fall over and break if the articles are bottles, or become wedged into the carton by the dividers and not discharge at all.

## SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

We have invented a collapsible divider for a carton which substantially overcomes this shortcoming. The divider is an improvement over a conventional divider composed of a plurality of strips, at least one of which extends longitudinally and another of which extends transversely. The strips are interconnected with one another and each has oppositely facing upper and lower horizontally extending edges and at least one slot which extends from an opening in one edge. The improvement is in the shape of the slot. The slot is defined by spaced apart side edges which extend generally vertically from the opening to an intermediate portion and which extend further to a terminal portion. Each strip has a thickness which is greater than the distance which separates the side edges of the slot in the intermediate portion but which is less than the distance which separates the side edges of the slot in the terminal portion.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The carton divider of the invention is described with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of an assembled carton divider;

Figure 2 is a plan view of the divider;

Figure 3 is an elevation of a strip;

Figure 4 is a partial elevation of another strip which interconnects with the strips of Figure 3;

Figure 5 is an elevation of a strip and an end view of strips connected to the latter strip;  
and

Figures 6 to 9 are further embodiments of the strip partition.

Like reference characters refer to like parts throughout the description of the drawings.

### DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

With reference to Figures 1 and 2, the carton divider, indicated generally 10, is used in conjunction with a conventional carton composed of corrugated or solid fibre or plastic and is used for packing articles which are shipped in bulk such as glasses and bottles. Cartons used for this purpose are well known and are not illustrated herein.

The divider is composed of two sets of strips which extend in two directions normal to one another. One set 12 extends longitudinally and another set 14 extends transversely. The strips in each set are parallel to one another.

With reference to Figures 3 and 4, the strips in each set have oppositely facing upper and lower horizontally extending edges 16, 18. Slots 20 extends from opening 22 in one edge. In longitudinal strip 12a the slots extend vertically downward from the upper edge 16 while in transverse strip 14a the slots extend vertically upward from the lower edge 18. The slots end mid-way between the upper and lower edges.

With reference to Figure 5, longitudinal strip 12b is interconnected with three transverse strips 14a,b and c. As is conventional, the strips are connected by placing each transverse strip

on top of the longitudinal strip and aligning a slot in the transverse strip with a slot in the longitudinal strip. The transverse strip is then pushed downward to cause the two strips to enter each other's slots until the upper and lower edges of both strips are in the same planes. The two strips will then be interconnected.

With reference again to Figure 3, slot 20a is defined by spaced apart side edges 30, 32 which are symmetrically disposed about an imaginary longitudinal axis 34-34. The side edges extend generally vertically downward from opening 22a to an initial portion and then continue to an intermediate portion 36. The side edges of the slot in that portion are parallel to each other and vertically extending. Beneath the intermediate portion the side edges define a terminal portion 38 and beneath the latter portion, the side edges terminate at a base 40. The base is approximately mid-way between the upper and lower edges 16, 18 of the strip.

When the strip illustrated in Figure 3 is interlocked with another strip, as illustrated in Figure 5, the side edges of the slots in the intermediate portions of the interlocked strips are aligned with one another.

As illustrated in Figures 3 and 5, the longitudinal axis 34-34 of each slot in the longitudinally extending strip is aligned with the longitudinal axis of a separate slot in a transversely extending strip when the longitudinally and transversely extending strips are interconnected. The slots having aligned axes are separated from one another by a space through which the aligned axes pass.

With reference to Figure 3, each strip has a thickness 42 which is greater than the distance 44 which separates the side edges of the slot in the intermediate portion. In that way there is a friction fit between a strip in the slot and the strip having the slot. The thickness of the strip is however less than the distance 46 which separates the side edges of the slot in the terminal portion. The slot being wider at this portion allows the divider to be opened and closed easily. When the divider is closed, it is substantially flat while the strips remain securely interconnected.

With reference to Figure 6, slot 50 is the same as slot 20 in Figure 3 except that its opening 52 is narrower than that of slot 20. Its intermediate and terminal portions 54, 56 are however the same as those of portions 36, 38 of Figure 3.

In Figure 7, slot 58 has an opening 60 which is the same width as that of intermediate portion 62. In Figure 8, the side edges of the terminal portion 64 are circular whereas in Figure 9, the side edges of the terminal portion 66 are partly circular at 68 and partly straight at 70.

In the slots illustrated in Figures 6 to 9, the distance between the side edges at the intermediate portions of the slots is less than the thickness of the strip and the distance between the side edges at the terminal portions is more.

It will be understood, of course, that modifications can be made in the embodiments of the carton divider of the invention without departing from the scope and purview of the invention.